



"The current mental health system has neglected to incorporate, respect or understand the histories, traditions, beliefs, languages and value systems of culturally diverse groups."

The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health: Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America. Final Report, July 2003.

## EXPLANATORY MODELS OF HEALTH Western vs. Eastern Paradigms

#### **WESTERN PSYCHIATRIC**

- Scientific epistemology
- Biochemical/Genetic etiology of illness without considering soul or spiritual origins
- Defines illness as physical or mental – discrete lines between mental and physical
- Verbalization of problems
   viewed as a necessary part
   of treatment

#### TRADITIONAL ASIAN

- Spiritual orientation
- Epistemologically based on faith and intergenerational transmission of knowledge
- No discrete lines between physical and mental illness
   holistic view of health
- Verbalization of problems is not viewed as productive or necessary. Silence is a virtue.

#### RESPONSIBILITY: Collectivism vs. Individualism

#### **WESTERN**

- Individual is responsible for self
- Successes and failures are attributed to the individual
- An individual is viewed as being autonomous and exercising one's own volition is viewed as a right

#### **EASTERN/TRADITIONAL**

- Group/family is responsible for the individual members
- Successes and failures are attributed to the family or parents of the individual
- Appropriate for the individual to subordinate their personal needs to needs of the group or family volition

## Prescribing medication for Asians with mental disorders

- http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1071749
- Asian patients may also experience side effects at lower doses than are seen in other ethnic groups. 13,14,15,16
- Start with half the usual recommended starting dose because of possible side effects
- Similar to their response to antidepressants and benzodiazepines, Asian patients often respond to lower doses of antipsychotic medication.

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West J Med. 2002 September; 176(4): 271-275.

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# TITLE VI of US Civil Rights Act of 1964 "Discrimination Based on National Origin"

How Title VI affects health and human service provisions for those with limited-English proficiency (LEP)?

### National Origin Includes

Birthplace, ancestry, culture, linguistic characteristics common to a specific ethnic group, or accent

